



## Daily Devotionals

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### PHILIPPIANS 1:15-18 MATURE KINGDOM JOY

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<sup>15</sup> *It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill.* <sup>16</sup> *The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.* <sup>17</sup> *The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains.* <sup>18</sup> *But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.*

The joy of the servant is that the message of the Master is being proclaimed. We only bring sorrow upon ourselves when we try to divine other people's motives. The wisdom of the world dictates that you are naïve if you take the actions or words of another at face value. It is always safer to doubt the motive of the speaker because by doing so you will be ready to defend yourself and not succumb to a sneak attack. Of course, this is consistent in a world where the ultimate goal is self-preservation. In our world, we have to be successful, strong, powerful, correct, popular, and held in high esteem by others. Anything that threatens that possibility must be ruthlessly dealt with in order that we are not diminished. In many instances, to impugn the motives of another is the most powerful offensive weapon in the wars of self-promotion. You haven't really said that Joe was thinking that way, just that he could have been – and you let the seed germinate in the listeners' minds. Where is the joy in that?

As Jesus told John the Disciple: <sup>38</sup> *“Teacher,” said John, “we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.”*

<sup>39</sup> *“Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, <sup>40</sup> for whoever is not against us is for us.”*” (Mark 9:39-40).

Assign not a motive to anyone who proclaims Christ as Lord. Simply rejoice in that the kingdom of God is being prospered.

*Let your message of reconciliation, Lord Jesus, be the motive for all that I do. May the proclamation of that message be my joy, no matter how and by whom the proclamation is taking place. Like John the Baptist, my prayer is that in all things in my life, I will diminish so that Christ might increase. Amen.*

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